
The Inside Scoop



When a sudden hurricane developed in the Gulf of Mexico, no one could have anticipated its devastating effects in areas never touched by such a violent natural disaster. The ferocious winds and torrential rains left little untouched in western North Carolina as they caused unprecedented flooding. The rushing waters of the angry rivers erased entire towns from the map and washed away rural farms, along with their animals and produce. Hurricane Helene swept away both livelihoods and lives.

Aspen, an Appaloosa mare with chronic uveitis living in the mountains of North Carolina, was scheduled for bilateral enucleation (surgical removal of both eyes) when Helene blew through the area. The disaster left her surgery in doubt, but a rescue stepped in to ensure that Aspen could get to the University of Tennessee for her operation. The problem, however, was not the surgery. Rather, Aspen had no home to return to. Her farm had been destroyed.

Enucleation is not an easy surgery and it takes time for anyone who might have had partial vision (shadows and light) to adjust to total darkness. Additionally, Aspen would need post-operative care and pain management. Starr Ranch Rescue in Waynesville, NC was kind enough to transport her to and from the hospital and take care of her for two days until someone else could bring her to Red Clay Rescue.

Her arrival day was nothing short of heartwarming. She walked off the trailer like a champ. We put her in the isolation with another sighted horse to keep her company. We didn't put her into the blind pasture initially because we wanted her close to us for post-op care. She sailed through with no complications and after two weeks, our resident surgeon (Phil) removed her sutures. Her eyes had healed beautifully. Now for putting her in the blind pasture!

We certainly want to believe that all of our horses would be welcoming of a new mate, especially our blind herd. At first, Aspen stayed to herself and only moved to go to the water trough or to get her breakfast. We observed her frequently and very carefully to ensure that she was not being bullied or abused. Unfortunately, one of the horses in that pasture who still enjoys a modicum of sight was less than friendly to sweet Aspen.

Most of our blind horses are extremely docile and loving, so it did surprise us that Jesse had reacted so poorly to our new resident. We could not afford, however, to have Jesse keep Aspen from her feed. Since Aspen had such an adjustment to make after surgery, we didn't want to keep moving her. She needed to be able to know where all her markers were--boundaries (fencing), shelter, water, and feed. And she needed to find a friend. The staff evaluated the situation and decided that it might be best to move Jesse since he was still sighted and let Aspen remain with her blind pasture mates.

We are happy to report that our beautiful and sweet Aspen has friends now. The other horses (minus Jesse) have welcomed her and enveloped her into their herd. She has gained some weight and seems very well acclimated to her new life and her home.

We are deeply grateful to Starr Ranch Rescue for placing their trust in Red Clay Ranch and allowing us the privilege of caring for Aspen. She is all settled in for winter now in her new and forever home. We are also grateful to you, dear followers and donors, for making it possible for us to say yes to this beautiful mare. ❤️



Haley Fowler joined the RCR team in the summer of 2024 and picked up the routine in record time. She knows the horses better than I do! She is photographed here grooming our Prissy.

Haley came to us with no prior knowledge of horses or their care but she is picking up the routine in fine fashion. Offering love to the horses is something that she specializes in.

We are grateful that she has become a valued part of the Red Clay Ranch Rescue Family! ❤️

Be a part of every day miracles...be a MANEtainer!

Every rescue story begins with heartbreak but *can* end with hope – thanks to people like you. Horses in our care need food, shelter, medical treatment, and training to recover and thrive. These essential services require steady resources, and that's where monthly donors make a transformative difference.

Your monthly gift ensures we can:

- Provide consistent care: Reliable funding means horses always have access to nutritious feed, veterinary care, and safe housing.
- Respond to emergencies: With predictable income, we can act swiftly to rescue horses in critical situations.
- Plan for the future: Ongoing support allows us to expand our efforts, helping more horses and providing lasting solutions.

For as little as \$5 a month, you can be a lifeline for horses in need. Together, we can give them a second chance at life.

Use the form on the back of our newsletter and join our family of monthly donors today! Help us build a future for Red Clay Ranch Equine Rescue and Sanctuary. Become a MANEtainer today!

The Mystery of the Wandering Horse

- or -

How I ran away from home, stumbled upon a welcoming five-star feed buffet, and realized I had found the Garden of Eatin'!

by Frankie

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times—best because I finally broke free of my rickety wire pasture, worst because I had no idea where I was going or where my next meal was coming from. But freedom, I decided, was worth the risk... even if it meant trudging up a steep ridge and into the dark and scary woods. I had no idea what I'd find along the way, but I knew I had to go.

It was a long time coming. A few years ago, my human died and left me with his brother. That wasn't so bad. I had the company of his two older horses and even though the pasture was small, I was not alone. Then one after the other, my pals died. Our owner worked and often left for days and even that wasn't so bad when I had my friends. But after they died, I only saw him when he dropped hay into the pasture. No one came to brush me. No one brought me carrots or apples. No one gave a lick if I lived or died. I have never felt so alone and unloved.

I tried to escape one other time but they found me and put me back in the pasture. The breach in the fencing that I had worked so tirelessly to create was quickly (and securely) repaired. I had to start again at zero. But never underestimate the determination of a mare pony! "Though she be but little, she be fierce."

When the time was right and the fencing properly razed, I made my escape. I hadn't seen my human, nor any human for that matter, for days. So I reckoned the time was right! I knew not to go to the road where I could be easily found, so I made my way into the woods where I was sure there must be lions, tigers, and bears. But I would not be deterred. Into the dark and up a steep ridge, I pushed myself. I thought I heard other horses in the distance so I followed the sound.

In no time, I came out of the woods and found myself right beside a fenced pasture with other horses in it! I practically collapsed from joy. As I glanced beyond this pasture, I saw more and more just like me! Surely this is horse paradise!

Two humans came up to me and tried to touch my face, but I ran away. I know well enough not to talk to strangers. However, the horses in the pasture seemed to like the humans! They came up to them and wanted touch and love. Oh, I have not had that in so long! The humans, unscrewed the fencing boards and stepped aside to let me in. I was still very afraid of them, but the horses seemed to want me to come in with them.

Would you believe that these nice humans gave me some food and water? And I didn't even have to ask? I had hoped they wouldn't find my owner and gave them no clues as to whom he might be, but I found out later that he didn't want me back and said I could stay here. I am so happy. Happy to have food, friends, and LOVE. "And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." I am so grateful to have found my forever home.



the end

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Gift Amount: \$ _____

Payment method:

___ Check attached (payable to Red Clay Ranch)

___ Please use my credit card

Card Number: _____

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Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____

Please make my gift:

_____ once **MONTHLY** _____ annually

Your gift to the horses at Red Clay Rescue is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. EIN 45-4590603

My gift is for: _____
(donation, special event, in memory of or in honor of)

Red Clay Ranch Equine Rescue and Sanctuary, Inc.
PO Box 1012 Lyerly, GA 30730
www.redclayrescue.org
EIN# 45-4590603

Upcoming events at RCR!

Mark your calendars for our Annual Open House!

Saturday, April 26, 2025 at the Ranch 1-4 pm

Join us for BBQ, music, tours, booths and lots of horses! Bring your friends and plan on having a great time with the staff of RCR and the 80 residents!

How your gifts were used last quarter!

